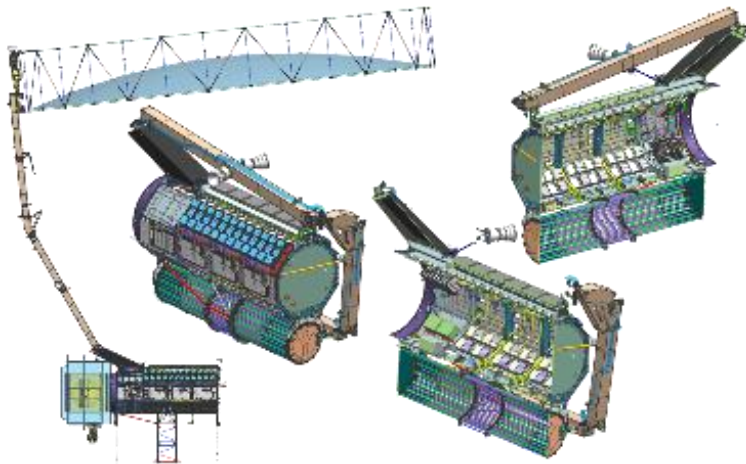




IEEE MTT-S IMaRC Conference

December 11-13, 2017

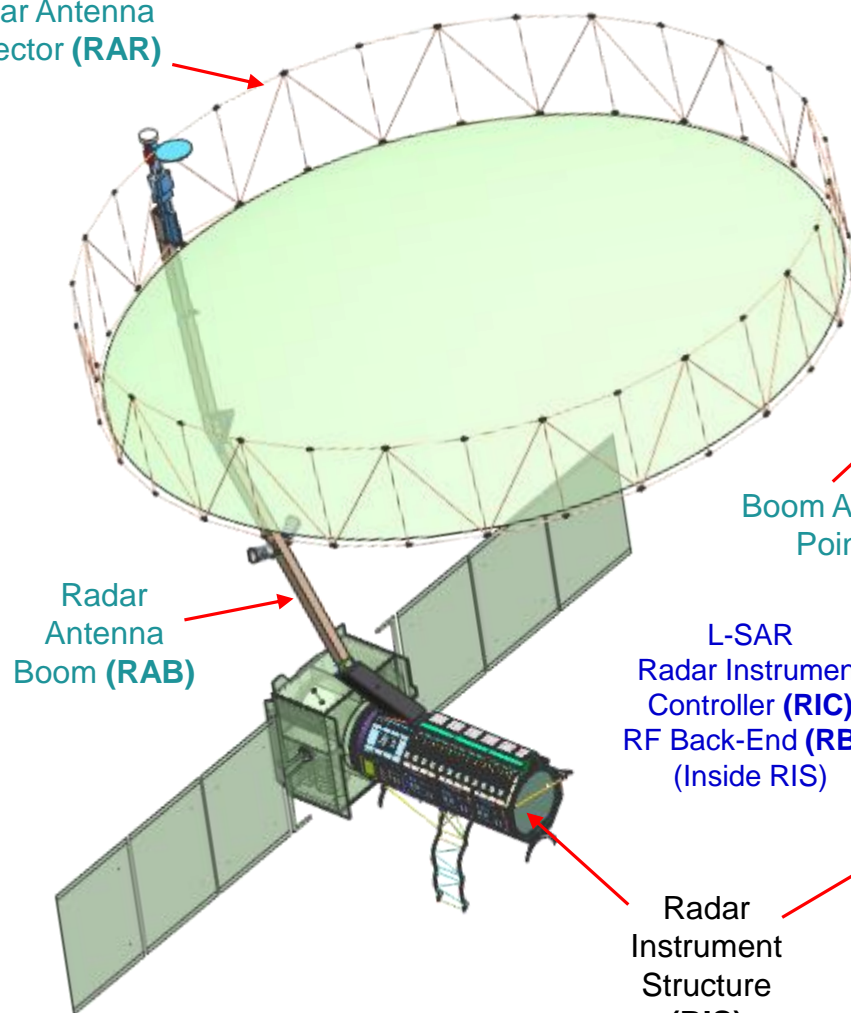


## **An Overview of the NISAR L-band SAR System**

S. Shaffer, P. Rosen, W. Edelstein  
G. Hamilton, Y. Kim

Jet Propulsion Laboratory  
California Institute of Technology  
Pasadena CA 91109, USA

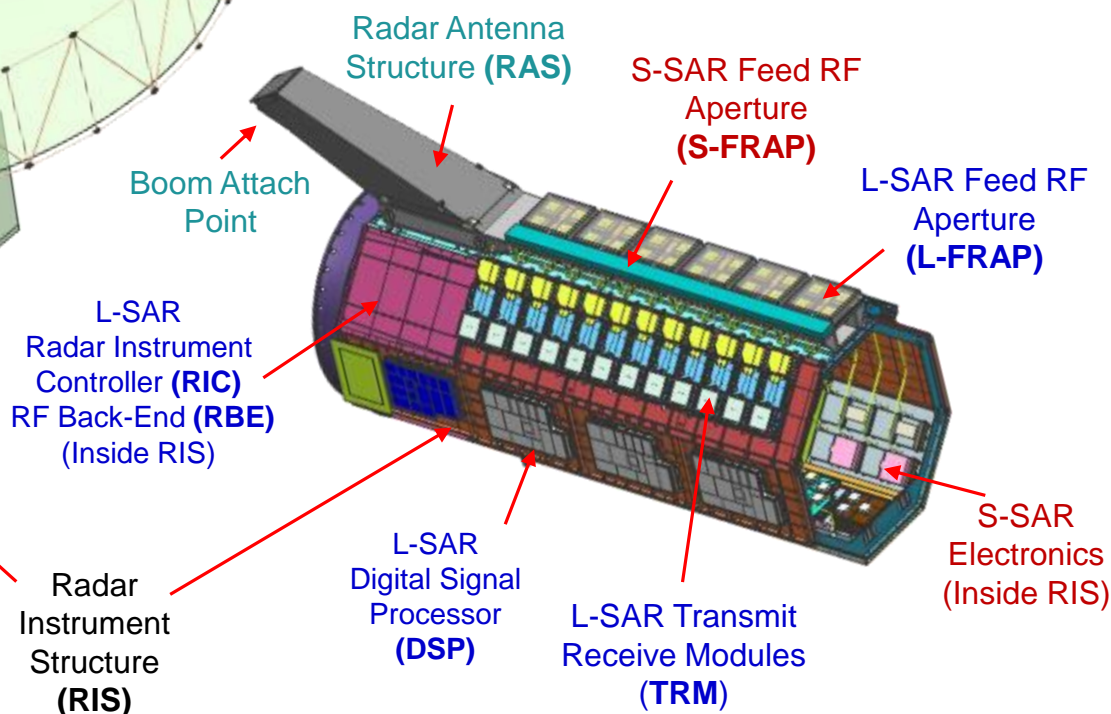
Radar Antenna  
Reflector (RAR)



Radar  
Antenna  
Boom (RAB)

## Instrument Subsystems:

- L-Band Synthetic Aperture Radar (L-SAR)
- S-Band Synthetic Aperture Radar (S-SAR)
- Radar Instrument Structure
- Radar Antenna



Radar Antenna  
Structure (RAS)

Boom Attach  
Point

L-SAR  
Radar Instrument  
Controller (RIC)  
RF Back-End (RBE)  
(Inside RIS)

Radar  
Instrument  
Structure  
(RIS)

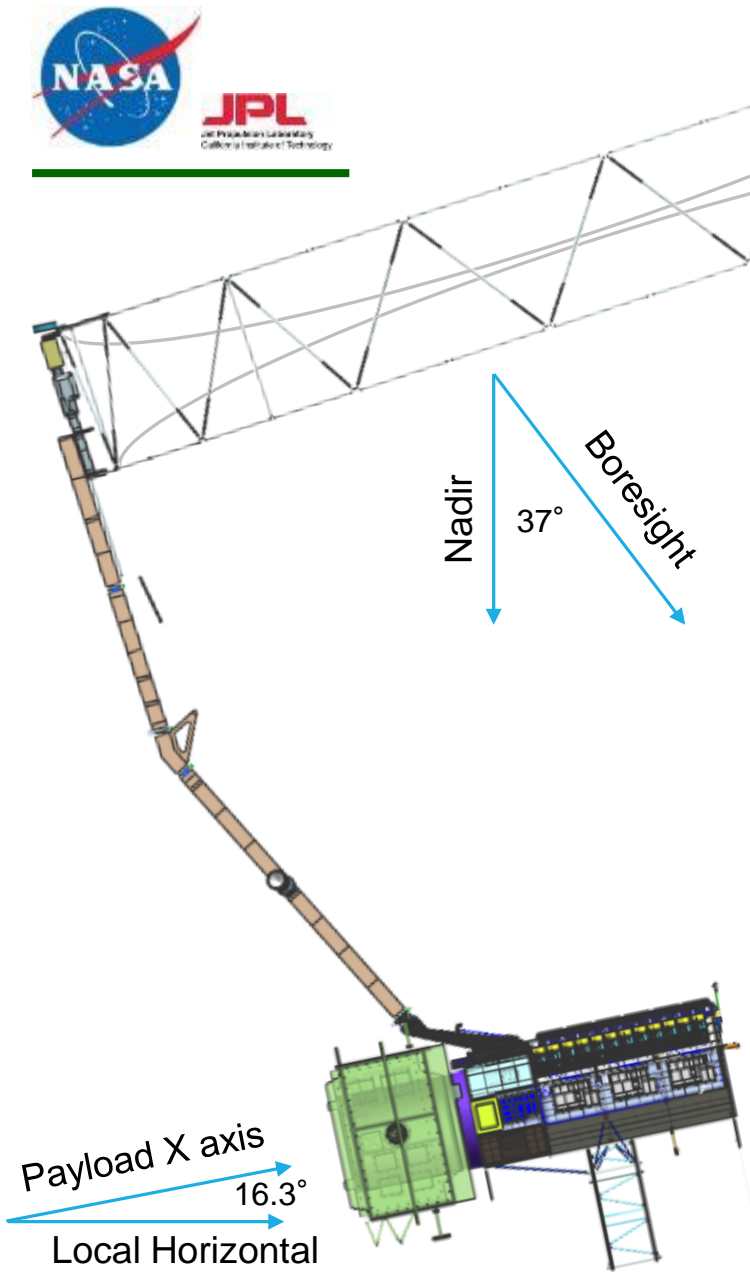
S-SAR Feed RF  
Aperture  
(S-FRAP)

L-SAR Feed RF  
Aperture  
(L-FRAP)

L-SAR  
Digital Signal  
Processor  
(DSP)

L-SAR Transmit  
Receive Modules  
(TRM)

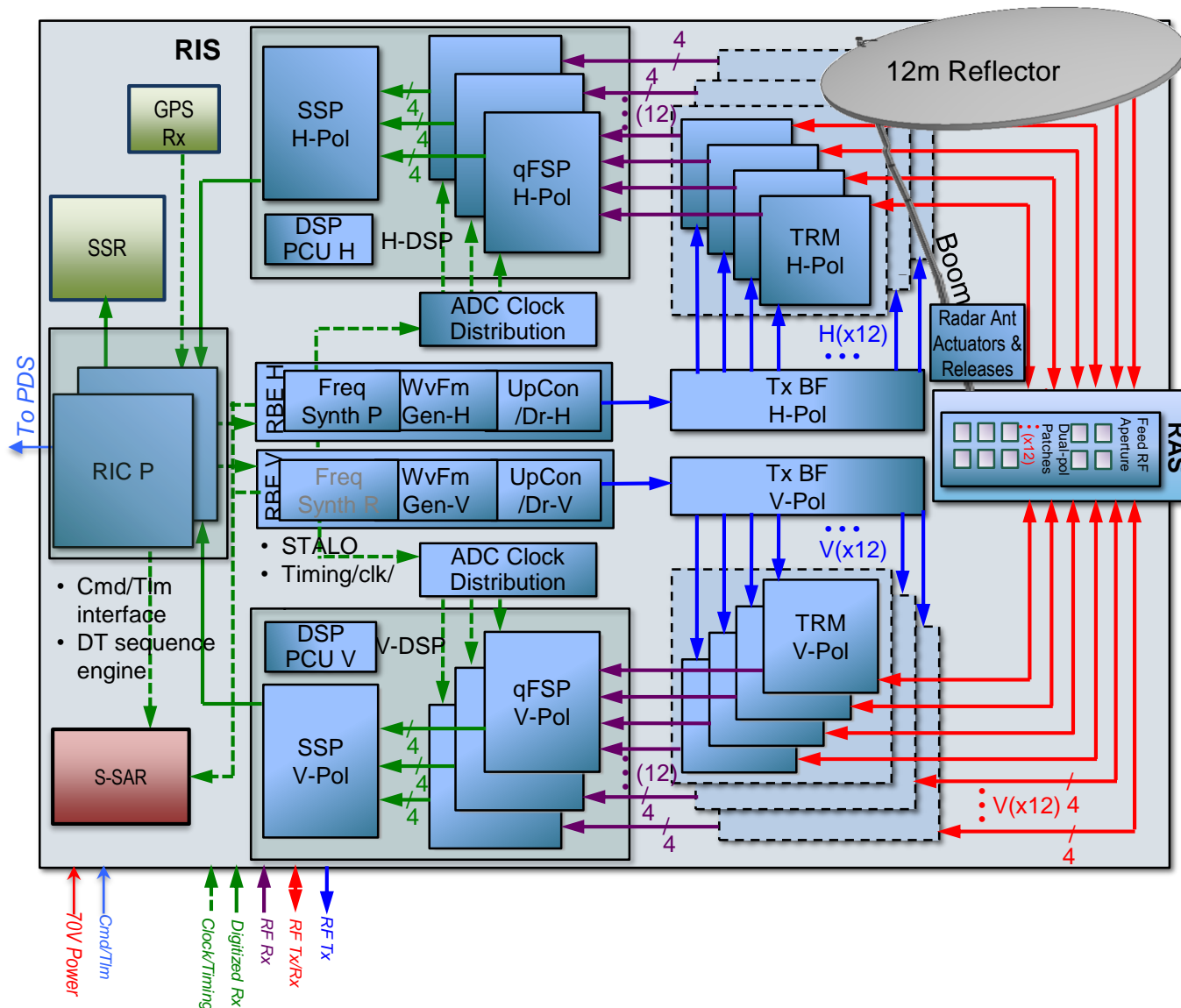
S-SAR  
Electronics  
(Inside RIS)



## • Key L-SAR Instrument Features:

- L-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (1217.5 – 1297.5 MHz)
- Polarimetry for classification and Biomass
- Repeat pass interferometer for deformation
- Split Spectrum for Ionosphere mitigation
- 12 Meter deployable Mesh Reflector
- Multi-beam Array fed Reflector to achieve a 240 km swath
- SweepSAR timing and Digital Beam Forming to reduce ambiguities and preserve resolution / looks
- PRF Dithering capability to fill transmit interference gaps when desired by science
- Seamless mode transitions to minimize data loss
- On-board filtering and data compression to reduce downlink

# L-SAR Instrument Architecture and Redundancy Strategy



- Combination of block redundancy, cross-strapping and graceful degradation
- Accepted Single Point Failures:
  - Radar Reflector and Boom: Impractical to make antenna redundant
  - Boom Deploy Electronics & Motors: Mass and cables over hinges increases technical risk / low likelihood of failure due to single use
  - RF Distribution Networks: Power dividers/coax are passive components

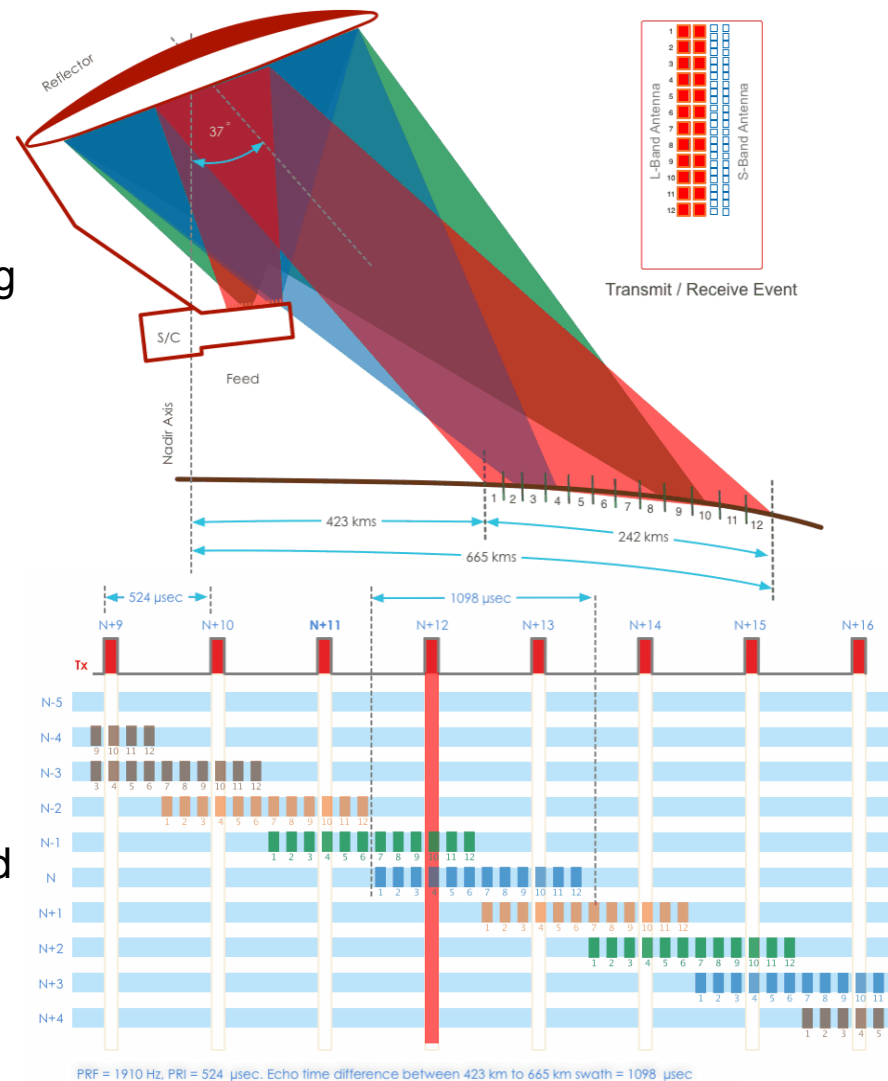
# L-SAR Measurement Technique

## • SweepSAR Basics

- On Transmit, the entire swath of interest is illuminate (red beam)
- On Receive, the beam is steered in the range direction to follow the angle of the echo coming back to maximize the SNR of the signal and reject range ambiguities
- Allows echo to span more than 1 Inter Pulse Period (IPP)

## • Consequences

- 4 echoes can be simultaneously returning to the radar from 4 different angles in 4 different groups of antenna beams
- Each echo needs to be sampled, filtered, Beam-formed, further filtered, and compressed
- On-Board processing is not reversible – Requires on-board calibration before data is combined to achieve optimum performance



**Airborne demonstration of the SweepSAR Technique conducted in July, 2011**

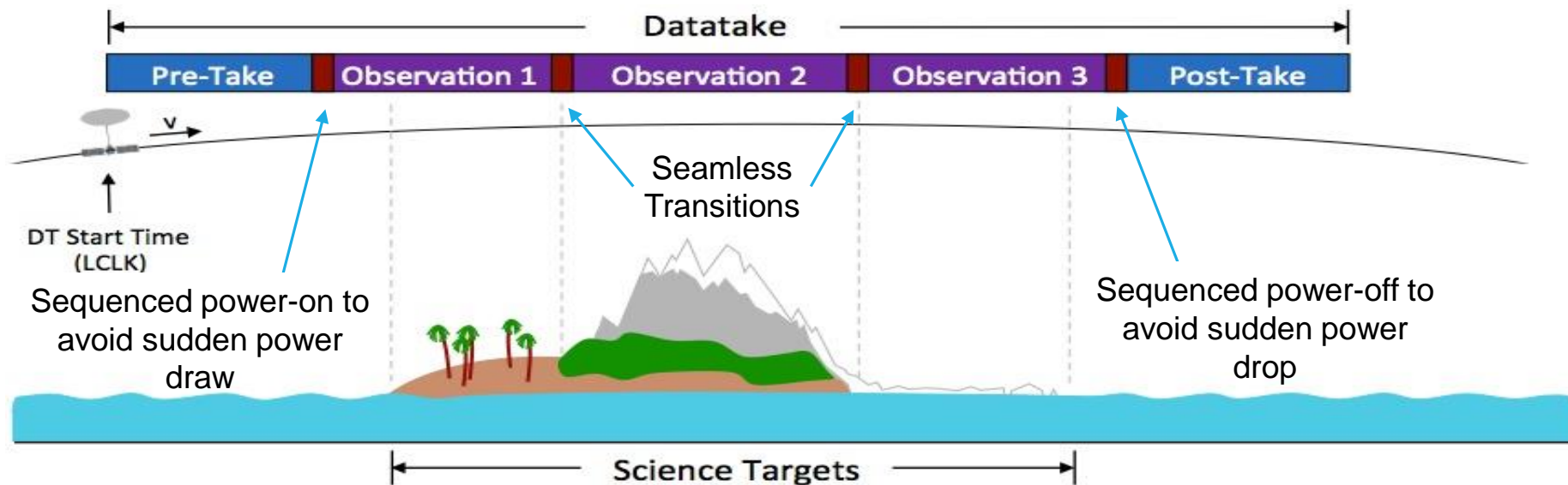
# Commandable Radar Parameters

- To optimize the radar observation for a particular science or application objective, several parameters can be commanded in flight
  - **Polarization:** Single Pol (SP HH or VV), Dual Pol (DP HH/HV or VV/VH), Quad Pol (QP), Quasi-Quad Pol (QQP), Compact Pol (CP)
  - **Pulse Repetition Frequency (PRF):** typically 1500 to 1910 Hz (single pol PRF)
  - **Transmit Waveform**
    - Waveform consists of 1 or 2 pulses, followed by a calibration tone (Caltone)
    - Pulses and Caltones are selected from 128 pre-loaded options in the waveform generator
    - Baseline waveforms for single spectrum observations are: 5MHz/25us and 80 MHz/45us
    - Baseline waveforms for split spectrum are: 40MHz/40us+5MHz/5us and 20MHz/20us+5MHz/5us
    - Contingency waveforms exist to place the center frequencies at the opposite ends of the allocation
  - **Block Floating Point Quantization (BFPQ):** Nominal science to use 16 to 4 bit compression. Option for 16 to 8 and 16 to 3 bit compression during instrument commissioning and contingency operations
- Nominal science operations use 6 L-SAR modes
  - 6 are used for L-SAR only observations
  - 3 can be used in combination with S-SAR to form 6 joint modes

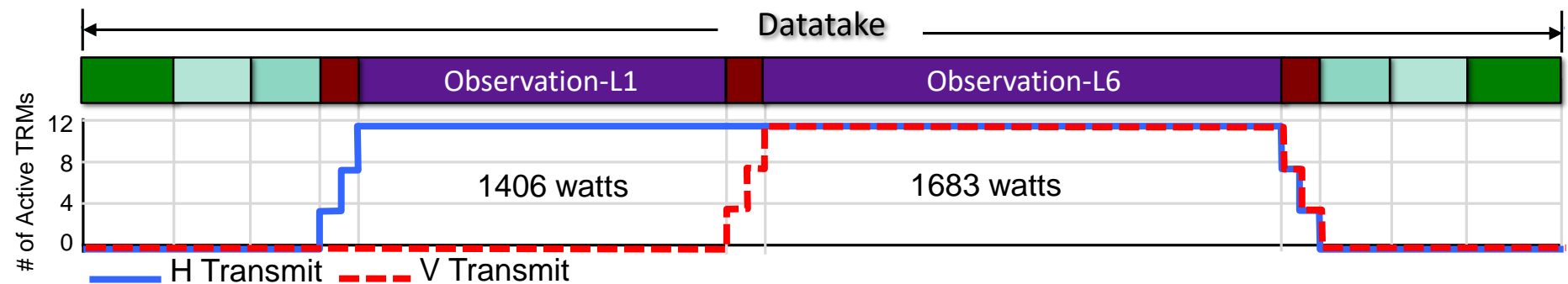


# How the L- and S-band radars coordinate observations

- The L-band and S-band radars use a set of upload-able tables to control radar operations
- Consecutive **Observations** with the same start time are grouped into a **Datatake** and collected back-to-back with seamless transitions between them
- Each Datatake has a Pre- and Post-take for calibration and at least one or more observations



- **Joint Data Take Timing Synchronization**
  - To avoid mutual interference during joint operations, transmit events are synchronized
  - S-SAR uses the L-SAR STALO and timing signals to derive its pulse timing signals
- **Datatake Power Sequencing**
  - Because of power system constraints, the transitions from idle to transmit and transmit to idle must be sequenced on to prevent transients on the bus
  - S-SAR also does power sequence, but offset from L-SAR to minimize transients on the power bus





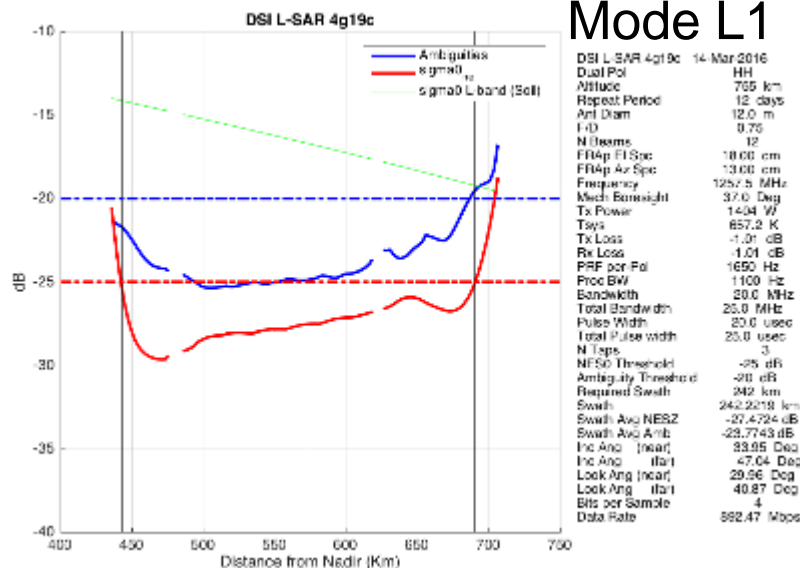


# Radar Modes

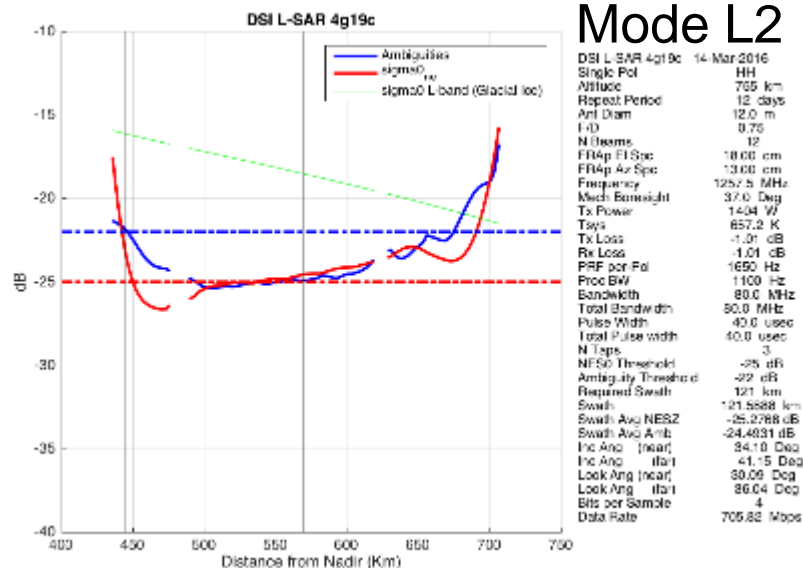
Config. ID	Old Mode #	Science			Performance				Resources			
		Primary Science Target	Freq Band	Polarization	BW	PRF	PW	Swath	L-SAR	S-SAR	L-Data Rate	S-Data Rate
					(MHz)	(Hz)	[μsec]	[km]	DC [W]±	DC [W]#	[Mbps]	[Mbps]#
0		Idle	-	-	-	-	-	-	1200	728	-	-1033.1
64	S1	Solid Earth/Ice/Veg/Coast/Bathym	S	Quasi-Quad	37.5	2200	10+10	244	1200	1604	-	3714
65	S2	Ecosystem/Coastal Ocean/Cryosphere	S	DP HH/HV	10	2200	25	244	1200	1836	-	626
66	S3	Agriculture/Sea Ice	S	CP RH/RV	25	2200	25	244	1200	3020	-	1242
67	S4	Glacial Ice-High Res	S	CP RH/RV	37.5	2200	25	244	1200	3020	-	1857
68	SX	New mode	S	DP HH/HV	37.5	2200	25	244	1200	3020	-	1857
69	S5	Deformation	S	SP HH (or SP VV)	25	2200	25	244	1200	1563	-	620
70	S6	Deformation-Max Res	S	SP HH (or SP VV)	75	2200	25	244	1200	1563	-	1857
128	L1	Background Land	L	DP HH/HV	20+5	1650	25	242	1446.4	728	892.47	-
129		Background Land Soil Moisture	L	QQ	20+5	1650	25	242	1446.6	728	892.47	-
130		Background Land Soil Moisture Hi Pwr	L	QQ	20+5	1650	20	242	1519.3	728	888.39	-
131	L2	Land Ice	L	SP HH	80	1650	40	121	1456.4	728	705.82	-
132		Land Ice Low Res	L	SP HH	40+5	1650	45	242	1480.6	728	813.49	-
133		Low Data Rate Study Mode SinglePol	L	SP HH	20+5	1650	25	242	1383.7	728	446.24	-
134	L3	Sea Ice Dynamics	L	SP VV	5	1600	25	242	1380	728	90.84	-
135		Open Ocean	L	QD HH/VV	5+5	1650	20	242	1519.3	728	186.55	-
136	L4	India Land Characterization	L	DP VV/VH	20+5	1650	25	242	1446.4	728	892.47	-
137	L5	Urban Areas, Himalayas	L	DP HH/HV	40+5	1650	45	242	1543.4	728	1626.98	-
138		Urban Areas, Himalayas SM	L	QQ	40+5	1650	45	242	1543.5	728	1626.98	-
139		Urban Areas, Himalayas SM Hi Pwr	L	QQ	40+5	1650	40	242	1713.1	728	1619.63	-
140	L6	US Agriculture, India Agriculture	L	QP HH/HV/VH/VV	40+5	1600*	45	242	1748.4	728	3155.36	-
141	LX	US Agriculture, India Agriculture Low Res	L	QP HH/HV/VH/VV	20+5	1600*	45	242	1748.4	728	1762.54	-
142	L7	Experimental CP mode	L	CP RH/RV	20+20	1650	40	242	1519.3	728	712.93	-
143	L8	Experimental QQ mode	L	QQ	20+20	1650	20	242	1519.3	728	1414.77	-
144	L9	Experimental SP mode	L	SP HH	77	1650	20	242	1456.4	728	1435.36	-
145		ISRO Ice/sea-ice	L	DP VV/VH	5	1650	25	242	1446.4	728	187.36	-
146		ISRO Ice/sea-ice - alternate	L	QD HH/VV	5	1650	25	242	1567.7	728	187.36	-
192	L1+S3	Systematic Coverage	L+S	DP HH/HV CP RH/RV	20+5 25	1910^ 25	25 25	242 244	1466	2752	1033.1	
193	L1+S4	Systematic Coverage & Deformation	L+S	DP HH/HV DP HH/HV	20+5 37.5	1910^ 25	25 25	242 244	1466	1828	1033.1	
194	L1+S5	Coastal-Mudbank (wet soil ????)	L+S	DP HH/HV SP HH (or SP VV)	20+5 25	1910^ 25	25 25	242 244	1466	1700	1033.1	
195	L3+S2	Ocean	L+S	SP VV DP VV/VH	5 10	1910^ 25	25 25	242 244	1403	1828	108.44	
196	L4+S3	Sea Ice Types	L+S	L: DP VV/VH S: CP RH/RV	20+5 25	1910^ 25	25^ 25	242 244	1466	2710	1033.1	1078
197	L5+S4	Glacial Ice-Himalayas	L+S	L: DP HH/HV S: CP RH/RV	40+5 37.5	1910^ 25	45^ 25	242 244	1578	2710	1883.36	1616
198	L5+S6	High-Res Deformation(Disaster/Urgent Response)	L+S	L: DP HH/HV S: SP HH (or SP VV)	40+5 75	1910^ 25	45^ 25	242 244	1578	1407	1883.36	1610
199	L6+S3	India Agriculture	L+S	L: QP HH/HV/VH/VV S: CP RH/RV	40+5 25	1550**^ 3100	45^ 10'	242 244	1735	1990	3056.76	1754
200	L6+SX	Coastal - Land	L+S	L: QP HH/HV/VH/VV S: DP HH/HV	40+5 37.5	1550**^ 3100	45^ 10'	242 244	1735	1504	3056.76	
201	LX+S3	Coastal - X	L+S	L: QP HH/HV/VH/VV S: CP HH/HV	20+5 25	1550**^ 3100	45^ 10'	242 244	1735	2104	1707.46	
202	LX+SX	Coastal - X	L+S	L: QP HH/HV/VH/VV S: DP HH/HV	20+5	1550**^ 3100	45^ 10'	242 244	1735	1504	1707.46	
203	L7+S3	ISRO Ice/sea-ice	L+S	DP VV/VH CP RH/RV	5 25	1910^ 25	25 25	242 244	1466	2752	216.89	
204	L7+S2	ISRO Ice/sea-ice - Joint Alternate	L+S	DP VV/VH DP VV/VH	5 10	1910^ 25	25 25	242 244	1466	1828	216.89	
205	L2+S3	Antarctic	L+S	SP HH CP RH/RV	77 25	1910^ 25	40 25	242 244	1487	2752	817.04	

# Example NES0 and Ambiguity Performance

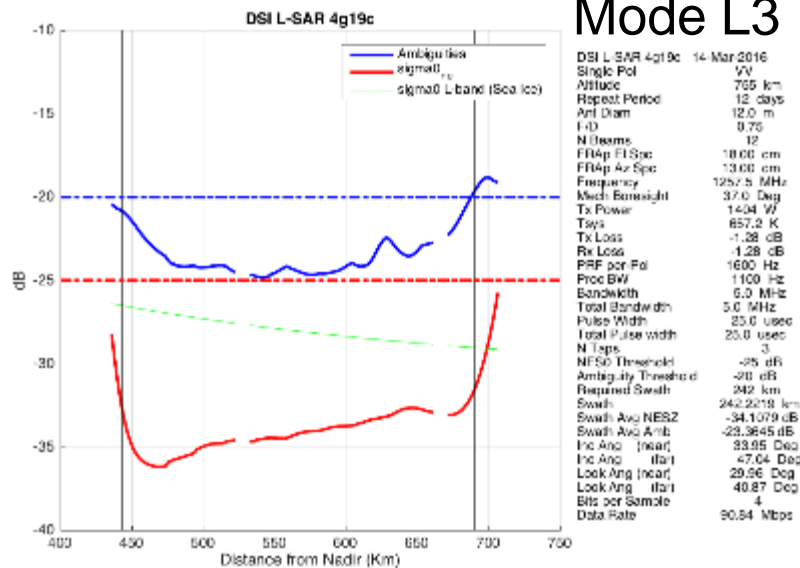
## Mode L1



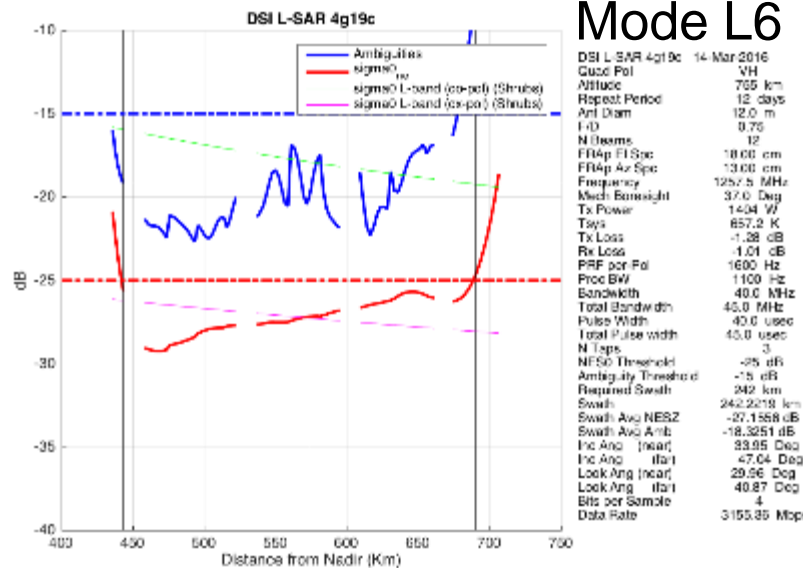
## Mode L2



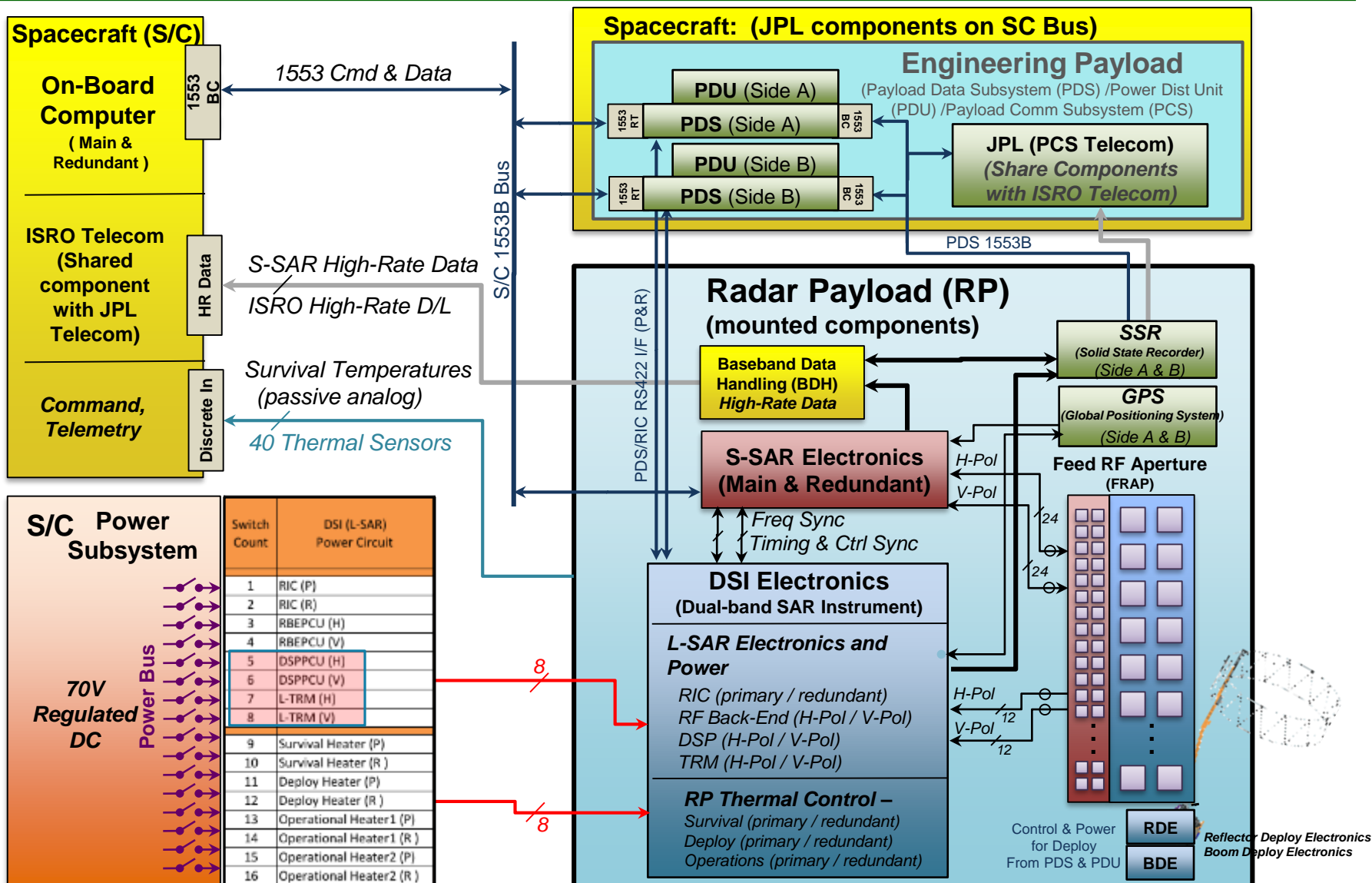
## Mode L3



## Mode L6

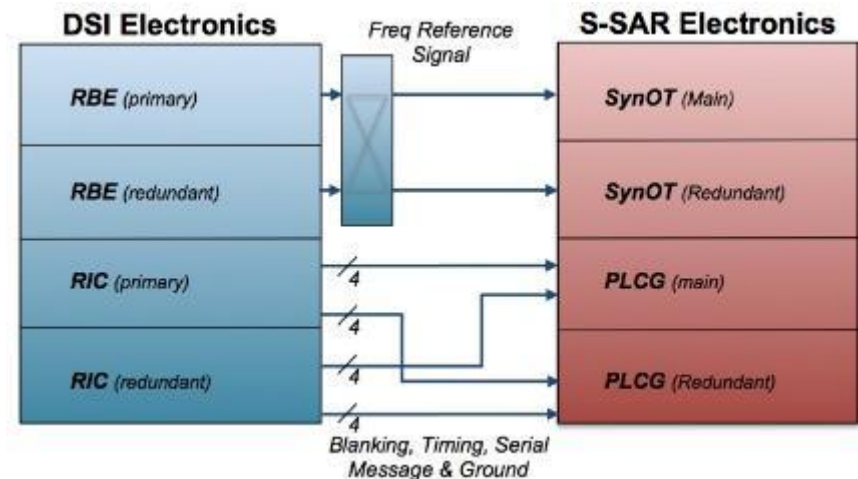


# External Spacecraft Interfaces



# L-SAR / S-SAR electrical interfaces

- To ensure proper timing during joint radar operations, four signals are generated by the L-SAR radar electronics and provided to S-SAR. These signals consist of:
  - Frequency Reference:** 10 MHz StaLO RF signal to derive timing signals (50ohm coax)
  - Global Blanking Pulse:** Pulsed RS422 signal to synchronize transmit events
  - Radar Timing Reference:** Pulsed RS422 to serve as a precise time marker
  - Radar Serial Message:** Asynchronous serial message containing radar mode, L-SAR clock time, L-SAR pulse count, GPS time and position, etc.
- S-SAR uses L-SAR StaLO and timing signals to derive its pulse timing signals for any Datatake that contains at least one joint observation
- No faults can propagate from S-SAR to L-SAR





# Progress in L-band SAR Electronics Engineering Model (EM) Hardware Development



**EM Waveform  
Generator (WG)**



**EM Up Converter  
Driver (UCD)**



**EM Frequency  
Synthesizer (FS)**



**EM RBE-PCU  
(Power Cond Unit)**



**EM RF Back-End (RBE) Stack**



**EM TRM-ESS  
(Energy Storage Subassembly)**



**TRM Pathfinder EM**



**EM Front-End  
Subassembly  
(FES)**



**Early JPL  
Prototype TRM  
(1<sup>st</sup> Generation)**



**Boeing TRM EM  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Generation)**



**EM RIC-CTB  
(Control & Timing Board)**



**EM RIC-SIF  
(SSR Interface)**



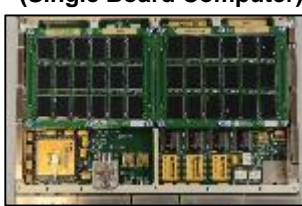
**RIC- RAD750 Qual Model  
(Single Board Computer)**



**EM RIC-HKT  
(Housekeeping Telemetry)**



**EM RIC-PCU  
(Power Conditioning Unit)**



**FM RIC-NVM (SEAKR)  
(Non-Volatile Memory)**

## Digital Signal Processor (DSP)



**EM DSP-PCU  
(Power Cond Unit)**



**EM QFSP  
(Quad First Stage Processor)**



**EM SSP  
(Second Stage Processor)**



TRM EM



RBE EM stack



QFSP EM



RIC EM

## • Transmit/Receive Module (TRM)

- Boeing is on contract to develop the NISAR TRMs and has built two EM TRM assemblies
- Critical Design Review (CDR) scheduled for January 2018; Flight build (30 units) will start in February, 2018
- Key Challenges: Phase stability, on-board calibration, unit-to-unit variability

## • RF Back-End (RBE)

- RBE EM (WG, FS, UCD, RBE-PCU) was built and tested
- CDR was completed in August 2017; Flight build is now underway
- Key Challenges: Phase stability, split spectrum, spectrum compliance

## • Digital Electronics Subsystem (DES)

- Completed Digital Signal Processor (DSP) EM development (QFSP, SSP, DSP-PCU)
- Completed Radar Instrument Controller (RIC) EM development (SBC, NVM, CTB, HKT, SIF)
- DES CDR was completed in October 2017; flight build is now underway
- Key Challenges: SweepSAR timing, PRF dithering, seamless transitions, on-board filtering and data compression

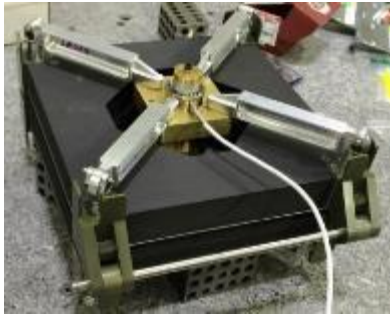
## • L-SAR EM I&T:

- L-SAR Interface testing completed, including L-SAR/S-SAR interface test
- End-to-end test performance is on-going
- Key Challenges: End-to-End phase stability, digital beamforming, joint L-SAR/S-SAR data take timing synchronization, power sequencing



# Progress in Antenna Hardware Development

## Boom and Hinge Development Hardware



**10" Development Boom  
Stability Test**



**7" Prototype Boom/Hinge in fabrication**



## L-FRAP Feed Tile Development Hardware



**Feed Tile EM  
(without radome)**

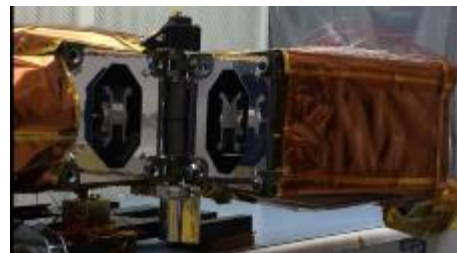
## Boom Hinge Deploy & Latching Hardware



**PT Spring Assemblies**



**Boom Actuator PT**



**Prototype 7" Spring/Damper Deploy Test**



**Feed Tile EM  
(with radome)**



**Hinge Spring Cartridge Torque Test**



**Boom Harness Torque Test**



**Feed Array EM in Test**

# Radar Antenna Reflector and Boom Status

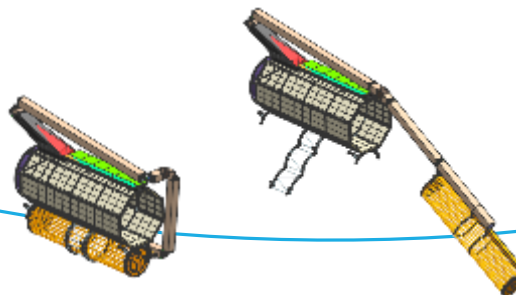
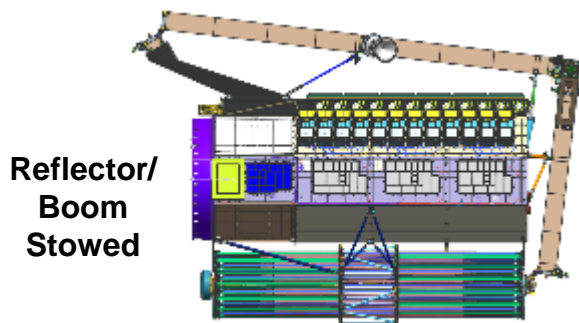
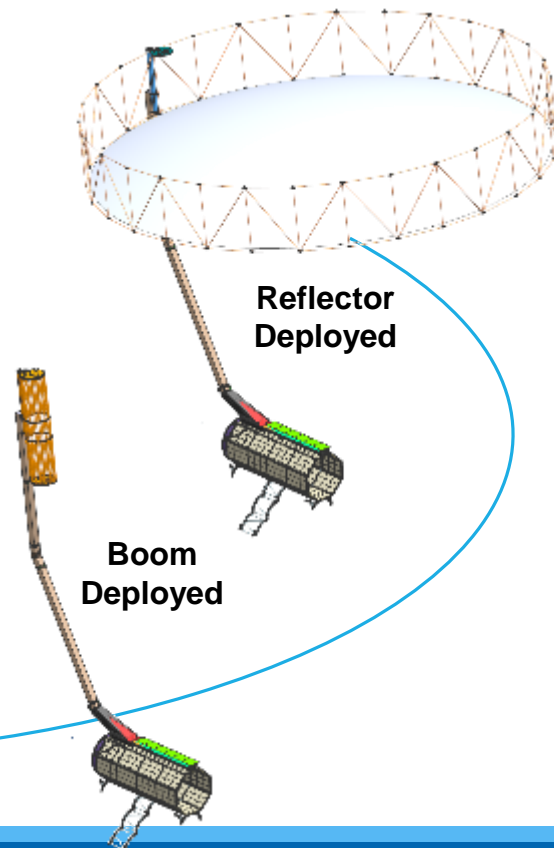
## Radar Antenna Reflector (RAR)

- Northrop Grumman-Astro Aerospace is providing the 12-m AstroMesh (AM-1) Perimeter Truss mesh reflector
- AM-1 heritage was confirmed for reflector; minor modifications to launch restraints required
- CDR completed in October 2017; flight build to start in Jan 2018
- Key Challenges: Launch and deployment loads, maintaining reflector heritage/minimizing design change, pointing stability



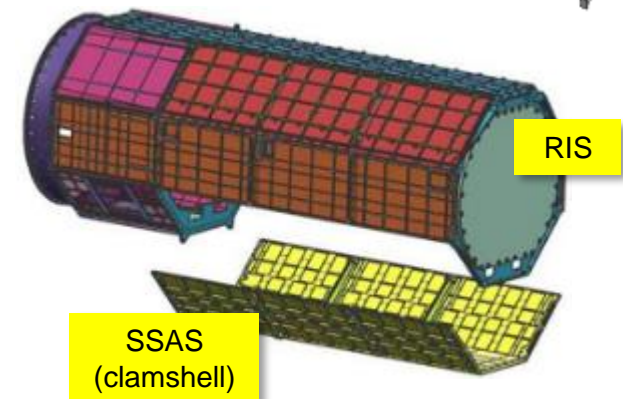
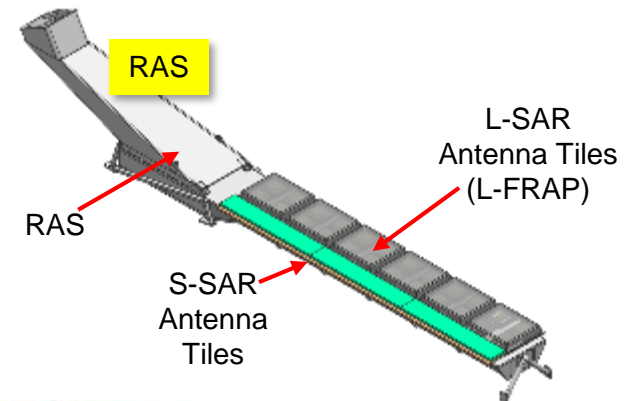
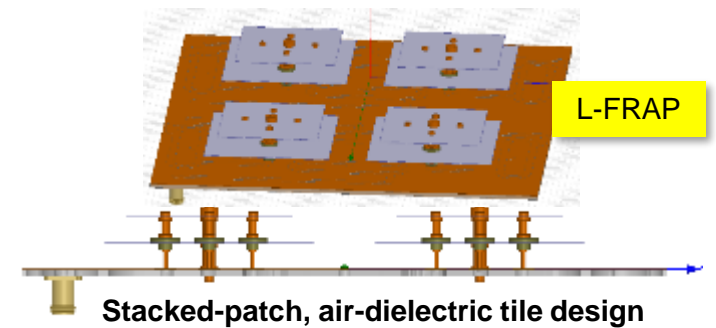
## Radar Antenna Boom (RAB)

- Orbital-ATK is providing the composite boom/hinge for the 4-hinge, spring damper design; JPL provides launch restraints
- Key Challenges: Launch and deployment loads, thermal stability, hinge torque margin, low mass



## Antenna Feed

- Built and tested the L-band Feed Aperture (L-FRAP) EM array (6 tiles)
- Completed L-FRAP/S-FRAP antenna coupling test
- Completed EM feed tile qualification testing (multipaction, thermal-vac, random vibration, acoustic)
- CDR is scheduled for January 2018; Flight build to start in February 2018
- Key Challenges: High power RF breakdown/multipaction, phase stability, pointing stability



## Radar Instrument Structure

- Matured the mechanical, thermal and cabling design, configuration and accommodations with ISRO
- Released all mechanical interface drawings
- CDR completed in August 2017; flight structure fabrication to start in January 2017
- Key Challenges: Complex interface with S-SAR, thermal design for joint L-SAR/S-SAR operations and left/right looking operation



## Acknowledgments

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